

## Did you know...

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### **...Azerbaijan has become a major international sports event host:**

Baku was selected as one of the 13 host cities for the UEFA EURO 2020 tournament. The National Stadium will host three group stage games and one quarter-final.

Azerbaijan will host the Formula 1 Grand Prix of Europe in 2016. The race will take place through the streets of Baku with the city's medieval Old City, its modern, iconic skyline and its spectacular views across the Caspian Sea creating a racetrack with a backdrop to rival other famous street circuits on the FIA Formula One World Championship™ calendar.

Azerbaijan will host the 42nd World Chess Olympiad in 2016. The Chess Olympiad is the most important biannual tournament under the international chess federation (FIDE). Azerbaijan came in fifth in 2014. Chess is one of the most popular sports in Azerbaijan. The legendary former world champion, Gary Kasparov, is from Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan will host and compete in the 16-team UEFA European U-17 Football Championships in 2016.

Azerbaijan will host the Islamic Solidarity Games in 2017.

### **...Azerbaijan has state-of-the-art sports venues to host all types of events:**

The National Stadium will have a capacity of 65,000 spectators. The multi-functional venue will host the Opening and Closing Ceremony of Baku 2015 and Athletics competitions.

The Baku Aquatics Center is an iconic sporting venue with a seating capacity of 6,000 capable of hosting all aquatics competitions at an international level.

The Heydar Aliyev Arena was constructed in 1990 and has held over 30 sporting events since its opening. The venue received extensive upgrade for Baku 2015 where it will host the wrestling, judo and sambo competitions for 7,800 spectators.

Crystal Hall is a multipurpose venue originally built for the Eurovision Song Contest in 2012. It received a major upgrade in the scope of Baku where it will host five events. It can hold up to 6,000 spectators.



The National Gymnastics Arena is a purpose built facility with a capacity of 7,000. It hosted the 30<sup>th</sup> European Rhythmic Gymnastics Championships in June 2014.

### **...Azerbaijani athletes delivered outstanding performances at Olympic Games:**

Azerbaijan has won 26 Olympic Games medals since its first appearance at Atlanta 1996. The medals have been won in wrestling, judo, boxing, shooting and weightlifting. A total of 53 Azerbaijani athletes competed in London 2012, with two wrestlers, Toghrul Asgarov and Sharif Sharifov becoming Olympic Champions.

The Azerbaijani delegation was very successful at the Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing 2014. The team of 21 stars of the future represented their country in nine sports, winning a total of five gold medals, six silvers and one bronze.

### **...these general facts about Azerbaijan and sports?**

Azerbaijan has one of the youngest populations in Europe. Around 66% of the population is under 35.

Azerbaijan is known as “The Land of Fire”. The first known fireplace and construction in human history, which is dated back from 700,000 to 500,000 years ago, was discovered in Azikh Cave, the largest cave in **Azerbaijan**. The “Land of Fire”-logo is found on the Atletico Madrid jersey.

Azerbaijani linesman Tofiq Bakhramov famously awarded Geoff Hurst’s controversial goal for England against Germany in the 1966 FIFA World Cup Final at Wembley. The current home of the national football team is named after Bakhramov – although they will move to the newly built National Stadium after the inaugural European Games.